

to the Rio Grande Water Conservation District has made this organization the well respected entity that it is within the San Luis Valley and Colorado.

Because he grew up on—and later managed—his family's ranch in Saguache, Ralph has long been aware of the importance of water to the San Luis Valley. Under his direction, the district took a leadership role in fighting against the American Water Development Inc. water grab, in water conservation education and in pro-active efforts on behalf of endangered species such as the Southwestern Willow Flycatcher.

Ralph's community contributions have not gone unmarked either. He has been honored with numerous awards such as: the Wayne Aspinall Water Leader of the Year, San Luis Valley Wetlands Stewardship Award, Friend of 4-H, Distinguished Service Award for Conservation of Natural Resources, Support of Colorado Association of Soil Conservations Districts, and he was inducted into the Honorable Order of the Water Buffalo.

Ralph has always looked ahead to the next challenge, has always looked forward to the next hill, in order to see where the road will lead him. I would like to wish Ralph and his wife Gloria the very best as they walk down that new road together looking for new challenges.●

CONGRATULATIONS TO JAY DAVIDSON

● Mr. BUNNING. Mr. President, I pay tribute and congratulate Jay Davidson on his reception of an America Honors Recovery Award given to him by the Johnson Institute, a nationally recognized organization dedicated to helping people overcome alcohol and substance addiction.

Mr. Davidson has dedicated his life to the cause of fighting addiction. He does this by serving as the president and CEO of The Healing Place, based in Louisville, KY. Under Mr. Davidson, this center has achieved a success rate of 65 percent, which is five times the national average. The efforts of The Healing Place have been so successful that this year Governor Ernie Fletcher has announced that it will serve as a model to 10 other shelter and recovery centers throughout Kentucky. In fact, this model has been effective enough that other branches of The Healing Place have been opened in Lexington, KY, Raleigh, NC, and Richmond, VA.

The citizens of Kentucky are fortunate to have the leadership of Jay Davidson. His example of dedication, hard work and compassion should be an inspiration to all throughout the Commonwealth.

He has my most sincere appreciation for this work and I look forward to his continued service to Kentucky.●

TRIBUTE TO PATRICIA M. DIXON

● Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the outstanding serv-

ice and dedication in the field of economic development of Mrs. Patricia M. Dixon, this on the occasion of her retirement from the Economic Development Administration, United States Department of Commerce effective today, September 28, 2005.

Mrs. Dixon has served honorably at the Economic Development Administration for 33 years, most recently and prominently as the Economic Development Representative to the State of South Carolina. Her contributions to economic development in South Carolina are numerous and have greatly contributed to the economic progress of the most distressed areas of the State. Her work has been widely recognized most notably by the South Carolina Association of Regional Councils, which awarded her their highest honor, the Outstanding Staff Award in 1991.

Mrs. Dixon has demonstrated her work in disaster recovery and base closures, saving jobs, solving solid waste problems, expanding job opportunities and rebuilding tax bases. Her innovative approaches to economic development problems and issues have been replicated in other communities. She also served as the first Federal cochair of the South Carolina Rural Development Council under the President's Initiative for Rural Development. Mrs. Dixon continues to serve on the executive committees of both the North and South Carolina rural development councils. In addition, she was instrumental in the original establishment of revolving loan funds for economic development districts in South Carolina.

Mrs. Dixon has garnered the personal and professional respect and admiration of her friends and colleagues at the Economic Development Administration and elsewhere. She represents the finest of qualities in a public servant and has been an incomparable asset to the greater effort of improving quality of life for the people of South Carolina. In conclusion, the retirement of Mrs. Patricia M. Dixon will be a great loss to the EDA and the State of South Carolina, but I wish her great success and happiness in her future.●

HONORING IOWA COMMUNITY LEADERS

● Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, every year the Iowa Council for International Understanding honors immigrants and refugees in Iowa who have, in the words of the council, "achieved, belonged and contributed to our community in a significant way."

The ICIU began in 1938 when a group of volunteers joined forces to aid immigrants fleeing the war in Europe. Since their founding, the ICIU has continued to provide cultural services to both the immigrant community and to native-born Iowans. The United States has always been a beacon of hope for many around the world seeking refuge from oppressive regimes, and it is my belief that each generation of immigrants has enriched our Nation both cul-

turally and economically. My mother was an immigrant from Slovenia, and I am proud to be a first generation American.

I take this opportunity to join in honoring the recipients of this year's ICIU awards and to thank and congratulate them for all they have achieved and contributed to Iowa's communities.

Joe Gonzalez was born in Mexico and immigrated to Des Moines in 1957. In 1971, he joined the Des Moines Police Department. He was one of the first Hispanic officers in the department and has garnered numerous awards, on both the State and national level, over his 33-year tenure. Among other things, Officer Gonzalez has been particularly active in aiding crime victims and victims of sexual and domestic abuse. After the September 11 attacks, he worked at Ground Zero.

Sonia Parras Konrad immigrated to the United States 9 years ago from Granada, Spain. She was trained as a lawyer and is most recently a graduate of Drake University Law School. Today she practices law in Iowa. Ms. Konrad is being honored today for her passionate dedication to helping victims of domestic and sexual violence, particularly within Spanish speaking communities. Among the programs she has founded is LUNA, Latinas Unidas por un Nuevo Amanecer—Latinas United for a New Dawn—designed to prevent and deal with the effects of domestic and sexual violence. This program has aided countless Iowans and has been used as a model in other states.

Juliet Cunningham emigrated from Kirkuk, Iraq, to the United States in 1979 to pursue advanced educational opportunities. She is actively involved with many Iowa institutions, including the Iowa State University Engineering and Research Complex, Des Moines Science Center, Society of Women Engineers and the West Des Moines United Methodist Church. In 1994 Mrs. Cunningham cofounded TEAM Services Inc., a soil, environmental, and construction materials consulting firm with her husband. Of particular note is her role in helping get a TEAM Services laboratory in central Iowa accredited for the testing of construction materials, making it the first laboratory in Iowa with these capabilities.

Dr. Liansuo Xie was born in 1958 and grew up in China's Hebei Province. He worked as a mechanic in a paper manufacturing plant there before studying to receive a B.S. from the Beijing Agricultural Engineering University in 1982. Shortly thereafter, he married and came to the U.S. to study further at Iowa State University where he eventually earned a Ph.D. and was honored with a Research Excellence award. He is widely considered to be one of the best engineers at the Townsend Engineering Company in Des Moines, where he has worked since 1990, for his work on project design and design productivity. Finally, Dr. Liansuo is a long-standing contributor to his community, serving as a founding member of